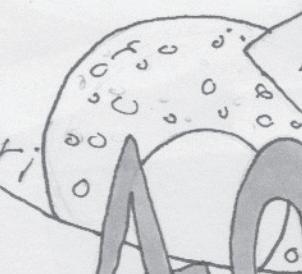


The Omen is trying to get next to you! Trying to
get next to you! Trying to get next to you! (Chorus)

Cheeri



VOL. 48 ISSUE 2

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Staff Box: (In order of appearance)
CHLOE: I EAT TRIGONOMETRY FOR BREAKFAST, MOSTLY BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS AND WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT IT TASTES LIKE.

**SIMON
BRYAN
BEA
JUSTICE**

Front Cover: Chloe Omelchuck
Back Cover: Chloe Omelchuck

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, or Chloe's mailbox (0369)

Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish.

Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill in the company of a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.



EDITORIAL

Chloe Anne Omelchuck

I am not a student of social issues.

I occasionally attempt to keep up with current events.

I am no expert on the american political process.

But I pay attention.

I try and take in what I see.

To think and write and create.

I am a student of systems, of complex interactions, and of the interdependency of everything around us.

And I know that nothing works without flow. A system is no system at all without feedback and interaction.

And that's why, though I am a student of science, and sometimes art, I am the editrix of a free speech magazine. Because I cannot convey to you all how important it is to me to know what it is that other people are thinking and to try and share with people my own experiences and thoughts in order to enrich our shared knowledge.

The Omen is but a small platform on which we can make a political statement and draw attention to various issues. It is a platform that people rarely use for a purpose other than sharing funny memes, beautiful photos, and reflective poetry. But if that's what people want to say, it should be said.

Ideas are important.

And I've said it before (many times many ways), but for me it always comes back to that simple fact.

When I think about what I want to write for an editorial I always think about the news, about things that I have opinions on, what I've heard in the past week, what I've experienced. I could talk about continuing debates and problems surrounding deportation, about Donald Trump's new national security advisor, about the warm spring days that make it difficult to be in class, but it seems like these opinions always work their way down to my desire to make sure to communicate and learn the opinion of everyone else that I come across.

So in a complete deaprtture from a discussion of politics perhaps I'll end this editorial by providing some food for thought.

I kind of introduced this topic in the erotica issue, but I still want to know what everyone thinks about sexuality and love. Not what sexuality they "identify" as, but what their sexuality is, how they see themselves as different from their broader categories. Do people think about this? What do people really think? Are there people out there who are completely sure in their own sexuality? Is that what it means to have found their "true love"?

These are topics that I think about, and I would like some insight please. It seems to be something that is little discussed that I feel we would all benefit from knowing a little bit more about each other.

The Omen loves you (whatever that means)

Section Speak

Political Communication in the United States

by Chloe Omelchuck

Monolith: an organized whole that acts as a single unified powerful or influential force

Government: the organization, machinery, or agency through which a political unit exercises authority and performs functions and which is usually classified according to the distribution of power within it

Autocracy: government in which one person possesses unlimited power

System: a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole

The System: an organized society or social situation regarded as stultifying or oppressive

Saying that we don't have a responsibility for Donald Trump, saying that "he's not my president," is a subversion of democracy itself. Even if you did not personally vote for him to become the president of the United States, the fact remains that you belong to a country with a democratic system that did. No matter what arguments that you can make about the unfairness of that system or that he didn't win the popular vote so it's somehow not "legitimate" are irrelevant. Donald Trump is the president of the United States and so the Republican message that liberals should stop complaining about the results of the election are not entirely unwarranted. Now, this is not the same as saying that everyone in the United States must agree with Donald Trump just because he is now the president. The nature of our democracy is that there is dissent and that people are free to pursue that dissent. We also should not put our faith in the system that elected him, since it is obviously one that is deeply flawed and demonstrates gross inequalities in our country's voting system.

I understand that saying "he's not my president" isn't so much a refusal of the fact that he is, but more of a refusal to allow him to define our personal values. But to deny that is also to deny its legitimacy and to deny the inherent

responsibility that we, as a country, have for his actions whether that's agreeing with him or working against him. That refusal is passive. It's throwing in the towel and walking away. Saying "it's not my problem because I don't support this" is giving away the power we have over our own fate, and the amount of agency that we have, as citizens of the United States, to shape our nation. And it's hard to take that kind of responsibility, because on an individual level it feels that there's not much that we can do to change our fate. As college students and ordinary citizens it's easy to feel removed from the political system, to just walk away. But staying engaged is key, and that's no more obvious than when we look at the results of this election itself.

Despite the (seemingly unprecedented) outcome, this election was hardly notable in terms of the numbers. Voters didn't turn out in quite the amounts of the 2012 election, but it was still one of the higher years for voter turnout, which is made sad only when you realize that means

the percentage of the eligible population that actually voted in this election is 58%.

In other words, our voting process is complicated not only by restrictive voting laws and the, in my opinion, antiquated, process of physically going to the polls (vote by mail, anyone?), but also the culture of reticence when it comes to voting. The reason that Trump won was because people didn't like Hillary as much as Obama. Polls show that Donald Trump got no more support than Mitt Romney did in the last election, and yet you will notice that Mitt Romney did not win the 2012 election. Hillary Clinton is no Barack Obama. There's a lot of things about her that weren't what we were hoping for in a candidate. She's very involved in Washington. She's not as good at inspirational speaking. She's not as nice to look at (and I know that I'm being superficial here, but likability is a big asset for any U.S. president). She didn't give us the same hope that Obama gave us for the future of this country. And I know that it seems like a cop-out, settling for her as the candidate of choice for the office of President, but the alternative is what we have now.

People carry the power of the vote with them on a very personal level. It's rare event in most people's lives to be

future. Donald Trump's presidency is an opportunity to ask;

What is it that makes America great?

What is it that we are truly striving towards? What system do we want to have? It is with those goals in mind that we should question the current administration and work to change it.

And quite honestly, I doubt that a discussion of these questions will bring Donald Trump around to a critical understanding of the issues, because he has no need to listen. He knows that he has the support of the section of the country which elected him, and that's all he really needs. However, it's not too late to ask these questions of those who didn't vote, of ourselves, and of those that did vote for him. Because if nothing else, let us take this election as an opportunity to try and bridge the gap between the rarely-interacting echo chambers which characterize U.S. political thought.

I said before that the part of this country that elected Trump cannot be blamed for holding the beliefs that they do and electing Trump based on those beliefs. I treated this "part of the country" as a monolithic entity. But just as liberals criticized Hillary Clinton for certain aspects of her policy, and voted for her despite disagreement with some of her views, the people who voted for Trump are not a homogenous group that share all of his beliefs. This election has revealed how, more than ever, the lines between the political parties in this country are so confused that it's difficult to get a read on what it is that the opposing party stands for. Both sides have stereotypes about each other, stereotypes that may be true for some but certainly aren't the case for the vast majority. It seems so cliche to advocate communication and respecting everyone's opinions, however people have the right to express their political views. And as hard as it is to accept that there are people in this country who aren't, and probably never will be, on the same page as us socially or politically, it's something that we have to live with. And not only live with, but to create plans assuming that we will have to work with these people in order to get a future that we want.

I often hear people (particularly 'adults') saying that they're friends with people who voted for Donald Trump or who are Republicans and that they can do it because they just don't discuss politics with them. To my mind, this is a great disservice to everyone concerned. After all, the whole reason that we're in this mess to begin with is an inherent

asked an opinion on something truly important- something that will no doubt leave an impact on the world for years to come. People take responsibility for their choices in voting, which is a good thing. But it also means that when people aren't all that invested in any of the choices (as took place amongst liberals in this election), it leads them to not vote at all because they don't feel that any of the candidates deserve that vote. And that is what really leads to officials being elected who don't actually represent the majority of the country.

All this discussion of the election and "why Hillary lost" may seem like ancient history since Trump stepped into office, but it's not. The system that got Trump elected and the reasons he got elected should not be forgotten. The people responsible for getting him elected are not the part of this country that most people at this college disagree with. That part of the country has always existed and always will (though hopefully it will become less prominent over time). That part of the country cannot be blamed for holding certain beliefs and using them to elect a president that they identify with (which is not to say that they should be absolved from the awfulness of some of those beliefs). They of course, bear some of the responsibility for the results of the election (since they did vote and all). But the "responsibility" for the results of the election are shared by all those who participated. The fact is that the reason that Trump was elected is because those that didn't vote could not be bothered enough to suck up their pride and vote for Hillary.

And this is the part that's not history. Because it's not too late to change the electoral college system. It's not too late to get laws protecting voting rights passed. It's not too late to elect new officials in congress and to, in four years, elect a new president. And it's certainly not too late to change the track that Donald Trump is trying to set this country on. Instead of writing him off, listing all the reasons that he shouldn't be President, and being generally dismissive of his stupidity, those who disagree with his policies need to apply some energy to getting him to change his mind. The protests are a good place to start. But what is really needed is an equivalent of that outrage and thoughtful critique in the news media. Instead of simply reporting what Donald Trump has said and done like he's any other U.S. president, there needs to be critical reporting on how his actions make people angry and why. We've had controversial presidents before, presidents whose views would be considered highly offensive and unacceptable in today's world. Donald Trump is their legacy. But since we are currently in the present it's key to not accept his statements as a new status quo, but to instead demonstrate the world that we envision for the

inability to see the world from another's perspective and to accept that there are people out there who aren't the same as ourselves. It's painful. It requires patience. It requires time. It requires an attention to detail and an intense desire to communicate from both parties. But who better to undertake that with than people who you already consider as friends, people who you know and respect (at least on a personal level)?

And just to be clear, the kind of discussion I'm talking about is not one of each side's viewpoints, it's not one of why either party thinks their view is best, it's a discussion of why you hold the beliefs that you do. And if you've never given any thought to that beyond the simple explanation that it's the party line, I would highly recommend that you do so. It is the discussion of why you believe something to be true that actually provides an opportunity for communication, because the reasons that people believe something are often the very things that make them different from others. The flaw in most political debate is that the goal is not to come to a common agreement or understanding, it is to have some kind of victor. Argument and discussion are not a form of competition. They are a method of communication.

In the last issue I submitted a copy of the song "the sound of silence." Many people say that it is about the digital age, about the loss of common human interaction to wires and screens. However, I have never seen technology as something that silences us. Digital media are an extension of print, which is just as much communication as the spoken word. People can of course be silent when they aren't communicating anything. Silence is not inherently bad. Silence is important for contemplation and introspection and thought. But the terrifying part of silence, the thing that makes the song so haunting, is the idea that what is sent out in the world is noticed by no one. Oppressive silence is not about lack of sound, it is about lack of impact. It is the tree falling in the forest with no one to hear it. It makes a sound, but who is there to hear it? The song says, "The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls and tenement halls." These words are said to be written in places that have no worth in traditional accepted knowledge. They are words that no one is reading and that no one is listening to except, of course, the people who frequent subways and tenements. But of course, they are hardly the people who need to see them the most. It is this lack of communication which represents the true silence of our world.

This election was, as all discrimination is, about fear and a lack of understanding of other people. And people have always misunderstood things about each other and found it difficult and frightening to walk in other people's shoes. And that's okay. It's also correct in the sense that everyone besides you is ignorant of how you see the world, just as you are ignorant of how they see the world. What's unacceptable is the dialogue which says that you are correct in your beliefs because you have all the information and have made the correct decision and that all others are just ignorant people who don't understand the first thing about the world. Ignorance and intolerance will remain unless we carry out honest conversations with each other about our views and experiences and listen to those of others.

At Hampshire we struggle against the monolith, the system, all these things that we perceive to be oppressing people and shutting out their voices. But the liberal mindset is just as much a monolith and part of "the system" as that which we criticize unless we step outside the familiar to entertain the unsettling and different. To accept that which is accepting of us is easy. But to accept that which is unaccepting is hard, and that is what we must change our own liberal monolith to do.

"To know is not enough."

That is why we're here.

I don't know if anyone else had this as a Hampshire admission question, but I wonder how many of us have actually thought about what that means. To know is not enough. To me, knowledge is everything. It is something that I never have enough of but if I did I sometimes think that that it would be enough. However, I think what this is getting at is that it's not important to know as to understand, to empathize, to slip inside the skin of that knowledge, to question its view, to ask questions of it. It's easy to fall into the trap of knowing. In a sense, you must sometimes stand firm in knowledge in order to find peace with yourself and the world. After all, constantly questioning everything is exhausting and somewhat unproductive. You have to make assumptions about reality to get things done, to move forward. But you must avoid knowledge's clutches. Always flirt with uncertainty. Doubt. Question. Be insecure. These are the uncomfortable feelings that we must seek out to attain a true knowledge of the world.

CREDITS AT THE TOP OF OPPOSTIE PAGE...

I must give credit to the following sources for influencing my ideas and thought processes in this rambling essay. Most of it is from Jon Stewart...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUkv_jPgTeg : <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/voter-turnout-2016-elections/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2xv4fba65U> : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFQFB5YpDZE>

NETWORK FOR AN ALTERNATIVE ECONOMY

submitted by Simon Fields



IN AN AGE OF FEAR, WE SEEK TO OFFER PEOPLE
HOPE. WE SEEK TO BUILD STRUCTURES WHERE
THE MANY CAN MAKE THOSE DECISIONS FOR
THEMSELVES

4:00 SATURDAY AT THE BRIDGE
www.unchainthecommand.com

APPALACHIA

HOW TO BE "PRO MINER, PRO WEST VIRGINIA, PRO KENTUCKY AND ANTI-COAL"

By Simon Fields

Mitch McConnell just got yelled at in a town hall in the blue grass state of Kentucky. There once was a time when West Virginia was the bluest state in the country. (Granted there was plenty of blatant "Solid South" style racism in those days, and our only goal shouldn't be to help the slightly less bought out party get five or eight extra electoral votes). But you see, the left used to be strong in West Virginia. West Virginians remembered how much FDR's New Deal had improved their lives. And while it did help alleviate conditions there, the Appalachian region remains one of the poorest in the country, the backbone of Trump's coalition, and the economic base of an industry which threatens the planet. It also has traditionally been fiercely independent -- at times more interested in democracy in the direct sense than New England (see the Philadelphia Caucus, for instance) and a base of strong labor unions. And yet the Ku Klux Klan was also born in Appalachian Tennessee. Back in West Virginia, the longest serving Senator, in the entire history of the U.S. Senate was one Robert Byrd, a former member of the KKK, and a former Majority Leader who knew Senate Rules better than anyone. West Virginia was the birthplace of columnist Michael Tomasky, Baseball player Wilbur Cooper, and Nobel Prize winning mathematician John F. Nash. It's home to natural beauties along the Appalachian Trail, and home of mountaintop removal, natural gas fracking and, did I mention "Clean" Coal? Oh, and thanks to the strong Labor Unions in this area, coal miners are often well paid -- compensation they deserve for intense, risky work that could end in an avalanche, explosion or at the very least, be effected by black lung disease. Yet, this is work which many are glad to do because of the pay, the benefits, and a deep heritage in coal mines. The grinding poverty in West Virginia and Kentucky doesn't really come from the mines at all these days -- it's primarily from outside of the mines, when the people who grow up expecting steady mining income (often) wind up working minimum wage jobs if they can find work. The unemployment rate is also higher than the national average, so a jobs program could be pretty helpful.

Many Liberals bitterly or ironically point out that "Red States" are the biggest Welfare recipients. But this isn't a fact which we should just use to hold over the heads of Paul Ryan Republicans who moralize about "belt tightening" and "entitlements" -- this is a failing of left-

liberalism. The program of the Democratic Party doesn't do nearly enough for the poor, but it does more to help the poor, the working and middle classes than the Republican Party. And yet. And yet Appalachian States and counties helped Donald Trump ride to the White House. They also tried to help Romney and McCain do the same. Clearly something isn't working, and it isn't just "strategy" or "messaging" -- Democratic policies have gradually left many of the working classes behind. The left has to constantly remind the party of Franklin Roosevelt not to cave on an issue like Social Security; not to sign trade deals which create supra national corporate run bodies and shaft working people in this country and in the other countries that sign those deals. But I digress.

I'm a Californian going to school in Massachusetts -- for all intents and purposes I'm a Yankee with internet access who read American Nations by Colin Woodard, and had to go onto YouTube a couple of years ago to find out how the word Appalachia is even pronounced by Appalachians (when I first had ideas about "A new New Deal for Appalachia".) When I look at Appalachia (and this'll sound like a cliche way to describe just about anything in a way that makes you sound well informed) I really do see a land of contradictions, some of which are outlined in the paragraph above.

Come to think of it, even being a Californian Jewish City Slicker doesn't make me quite as much of an outsider as one may assume. Afterall, Californian culture is really an amalgamation of at least four other cultures: the culture of the Native American who lived in California long before anyone else did; the culture of the Spanish Norteno (and "Mestizo" descendants) who established missions from San Diego to Santa Barbara; the culture of the New England Puritan who sailed all the way around South America to reach Western Shores (and to "Christianize" them) and perhaps the most famous of all, the culture of the Appalachian joining a wagon train to farm in Oregon or to mine for gold in California. Nevertheless, I'm not necessarily the best person to sell the vague ideas you'll read about in this article, or even to be involved in details of implementation. Afterall, I don't live there, I don't know the situation on the ground the way people who live there do.

But I do see a variety of problems and, I'll be perfectly frank with you, opportunities. If some of these problems can get solved (by people living in the area and who know them best) then we can join with Appalachia to take full advantage of an infinitely better situation. And now, putting my outsider hat back on, a world where we engage the people of this region could be remarkably better than the World where half of the left resignedly do nothing while the other half go about laughing at "back-country hillbilly hicks" as things worsen for the people living in the area, and simultaneously worsen for the rest of us (albeit

in different ways).

A few years ago, I had two grand plans. One, the one most closely related to West Virginia, Kentucky and other States in this region was, "The New Deal for Appalachia". I was at a Climate Justice March, you see, and I saw this sign that was being carried by Kentuckian environmentalists, which said something about Mitch McConnell on one side, and which said, "Pro Miner, Pro Kentucky, Anti Coal" on the other. I thought about it for a while; how can one really be all of these things at once? How can you be anti-Coal but pro-Coal miner? Is this a matter of being all things to all people, are you talking about different miners, or can this slogan describe a viable policy, something which can help people make a case which must be made (and which may even get taken seriously)?

After doing research about the coal industry, and about poverty in the area (I cannot stress enough the fact that I am a humble 21 year old outsider with internet access) and after making rough estimates of the cost of an idea, and how it would be paid for, I made a video. I was sure to pronounce Appalachia the way it was pronounced on YouTube. Well, here was the case I made, and the idea I presented:

- a. The coal industry in this area has been in decline for a long time, due to many factors.
 - A shift in Global Markets away from Coal, and towards Natural Gas and Renewable Energy.
 - A shift within the Coal industry, away from West Virginia, and towards Wyoming.
 - A shift towards mechanization and automation that is putting more and more miners out of work.

B. In other words, Obama's EPA Climate policies are just the tip of the iceberg (no pun intended); your standard of living is threatened by things which are happening regardless of what the EPA does.

C. You may know people in your communities, at least according to comment boards you very well may know people who grew up, expecting to get a steady job in a coal mine. But as there have been fewer and fewer mining jobs due to the above factors; decade after decade more and more of your friends wind up working minimum wage jobs if they can find work.

D. Yes, you have a deep heritage in these coal mines, and they pay well, and I am an outsider and I can't presume to know what things are like -- but, wouldn't you like to know that you and your kids and your grandkids don't wind up coughing on coal dust? Regardless of what you think about Climate Change and its causes (and even the new zealously pro-industry guy in the EPA admits that it's real and at least partly caused by human activity) but really, regardless of that, wouldn't you like comparable pay for safer work? For yourself? For you kids? And for your

grandkids?

E. When some politician or CEO is talking about the "War on Coal" you should reach for your pockets, and your throats. This'll become more clear now that Washington D.C. is no longer waging a war on coal at all, as the EPA does everything in its power to do absolutely nothing, and as the coal jobs fail to return. There is no nice way to put this, your regional coal industry is dying -- the question is whether it'll die a slow, painful death that'll put you out of work and cause irreparable environmental damage to mountaintops and trails which blaze with wildfires as the droughts grow more frequent at home, and cause even more catastrophic damage to the Global Environment; or whether it'll die in a way which can empower you to adapt, gain a new livelihood, help your neighbors get better livelihoods, revitalize infrastructure, and yes, help reduce the impact of Climate Change around the World.

F. Therefore, let's have an Appalachian New Deal! Let's guarantee jobs with comparable pay to all the coal miners in the state who may lose a job due to the factors described above, or due to a carbon tax which will pay for these new jobs. That sounds counterintuitive but as I said, your job security in the mines worsens as Global Markets shift away from Coal, as Coal shifts towards Wyoming, and as West Virginia/Kentucky Coal shifts towards mechanization. Do you want a guaranteed job, with safer conditions and comparable pay and benefits, or do you want this job -- granted, a job your parents and grandparents and older ancestors may have had; granted, a job that pays well, but also a job that threatens your health, and which may not last very long?

So you see, that was my first grand plan. The New Deal for Appalachia. I was thinking that it could be enacted by a statewide ballot initiative, but quite frankly, I never took up much initiative to get any activists in the area involved in putting anything on the ballot. A statewide tax on carbon, if priced highly enough, could pay for a job guarantee for coal miners, and perhaps people in coal fired plants. (Having enough money to employ laid off miners will be easier since there are fewer miners, having enough to employ laid off fire-plant workers may be even more important, since many more West Virginians and Kentuckians work in the coal fired plants than in the mines. I can go more into detail about the numbers and about what is and isn't feasible at different rates of carbon taxation in another article). These jobs could be in the public sector, if people want to unionize they should be able to, and if not, then that should be up to them. The jobs could be in a plethora of fields -- infrastructure, construction, transportation, solar power installation, education, working in the National Parks, etc.

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The livelihoods from these jobs can help the individuals in question, the work which they do can be beneficial to their communities. Another component of this New Deal should probably be tax relief for low income households -- the issue with a carbon tax is that it is a regressive tax. Nevertheless, the idea that Climate Change is a "rich man's problem" is a fallacy, the poorest people in this country and around the World are most susceptible to its effects. (See the health effects of coal mining and fire plants in Appalachia itself, or the people worst affected by Hurricane Katrina, or zoom out further and consider low lying countries which don't have the resources to even begin dealing with the results of our current shortsightedness). Another crucial point that needs to be elaborated on in another article. Finally, in addition to the job guarantee to coal miners and/or to people who work in the coal sector, and tax relief (accompanied by an offer of assistance in the form of solar installation, or green roofing, or taking other steps to help reduce the emissions and energy bills of poor households) it would be most ideal if there are also jobs available to (at least) some un and underemployed people who are willing and able to work. The devil is, of course, in the details.

The reasons why I am not getting into those details are two-fold: one is, that this isn't only about that idea but also about another one, which I recently realized can intersect with the first. The second reason that there aren't more numbers (and while I would gladly give you my estimates of potential revenues from a carbon tax and the costs of this program in another article) the fact is that I am an outsider. I feel an obligation to politely suggest, and even to demonstrate the viability of my suggestions, but I am also aware of the fact that these things must be done by the people of West Virginia, and/or Kentucky, and/or Tennessee, and/or Pennsylvania, etc. Which is, of course, why I'm testing it out in a Massachusetts magazine which will accept any submission...

But here, briefly, was my other idea, one which I've devoted much more time to thinking and writing about in other places. Economic inequality in this country, and indeed, around the World is growing worse and worse. Political inequality is interrelated with this; our democratic process was already getting hijacked by the wealthy when I first had this idea, though now authoritarian types are simultaneously growing in stature.

Part of the problem, indeed, I think the main source of the problem is the way most workplaces are structured. Corporations are stratified by design, corporations are run by elites and for the benefits of elites. But workplaces don't have to be that way. Indeed, worker cooperatives are firms which are democratically controlled and owned by the people working in them; (again this is less for the Ideas and Action crowd and more for any newcomers to

this model who may see this) but in practice that means that you get to vote on your own wages, benefits, hours, and own your share of the profit. At the State and Local level, we're spending 80 billion dollars a year on Corporate Welfare, Subsidies (they come in the form of special tax kickbacks for certain companies, grants, low interest loans, use of Public Lands, etc.). Once again we are confronted with a problem and an opportunity. We need to introduce People's Budgeting, or Participatory Budgeting to as many communities as possible (again, more on this in another article -- I really can only cover so much and you only have so much patience). After proving that redirecting the subsidies to coop development can work locally, we'd push for ballot measures redirecting State subsidies to creating worker cooperatives. Spreading worker's self management as far as possible. Here's the thing: we're talking about 80 billion dollars in subsidies. Once again, I won't do the math to demonstrate how far a portion of that money can go in a process of spreading coops and worker's self management along with them --not in this article. I can do that elsewhere, but this is much broader, and narrower at the same time.

But how do I know that State and Local Governments spend 80 billion dollars a year on Corporate Subsidies? Because of a study done by the New York Times from 2012, which said that it's at least that number. There is also a wonderful database and map, which shows all of the subsidies that the New York Times knows about, in each state. And West Virginia has fairly high corporate subsidies per capita, in other words, each West Virginian taxpayer is spending a lot of money on enriching their Corporate masters.. The same could be said of tax payers in Massachusetts, California, Michigan and Texas, to name just a few states (though in the case of those particular States, the total subsidies are much higher.) In fact, my home state which, you may have guessed is California, spends about four billion dollars a year on Corporate Subsidies: West Virginia spends about 1.57 billion dollars a year on Corporate Subsidies. California taxpayers spend \$112 per capita on these subsidies, and West Virginia taxpayers spend \$845 per capita on Corporate subsidies. West Virginians, just think, each and every one of you is spending nearly a thousand dollars, on average, to enrich wealthy corporations. And on average, this isn't a statewide but rather a nationwide statistic, Corporate Subsidies cost \$100,000 for every job that is created or retained. On the other hand, it costs about \$30,000 to start a small business (on average). So, putting whatever political views you may have aside, would you rather spend 100 K for one job which could easily get shipped overseas or where the wages can get cut, or 30 K for five or ten jobs which'll never get shipped overseas since workers will never vote themselves out of a job? 100 k for a single job where you wind up subordinated to a rigid hierarchy, or 30 K where you either have no boss, or where you elect, hire and fire managerial technocrat types instead of the other

way around? What would you prefer?

You see, this is a broad question, that I'd like to ask many different people in many different places. How does this apply to Appalachia? Well, for starters, it could be a way of testing the waters for policies which are progressive but which may still be appealing to Kentuckians and West Virginians. Second, it could be another component of the Appalachian New Deal. Suppose, for instance, that after guaranteeing a job to every coal miner and coal fire plant worker who loses their current job, suppose that there isn't enough revenue to create additional jobs, for the unemployed and for the underemployed folks in the state who are most likely to be impoverished? We need to do something to help them too. Perhaps phase one of this New Deal can be about finding ways to build a movement that can empower poor people to stick it to the fat cats and create jobs for themselves which they can control. Perhaps phase two would be guaranteeing jobs to the people in the coal mines and fireplants; killing a dying industry in the most humane way possible. But you see, these two ideas intersect.

And now let us step away and look at how this affects us. As "Coal Country" suffers, Coal Country becomes Trump country. The fact is that before Obama, no Democrat ever won the White House without at least some Appalachian support. Bill Clinton practically won every state in the Greater Appalachian Region. Right, but this isn't just about electing Clinton style Democrats is it? Of course not! Think about the environmental implications. As President Trump, Mitch McConnell, and Scott Pruitt team up to end "the War on Coal" and launch their own war on the planet, things could be much trickier for them if "Coal Country" turns the tables on everyone and starts imposing carbon taxes. Think, for instance, about preclusion laws. Scott Pruitt doesn't only want to stop the Federal Government from doing anything about Climate Change, he also is mulling measures to stop states like, you guessed it, California from doing anything on their own accord. Hopefully the Courts will side with States like California on this issue, as they have in the past. But imagine if it isn't just New England and West Coast States -- what if a state, or two or three in the heart of Coal country begins implementing their own carbon taxes? Now let's just keep in mind what will be at play in a region often considered Trump's base: the sense that these States won't be able to save the livelihoods of miners and revitalize their economies because the *Federal Government* is infringing on their rights. That's right, Trump would be violating the right of the "Sovereign State of ____" remember that's going to strike a nerve, to rejuvenate its own economy. We often remember States Rights issues, particularly in this region, as being used to justify conservative reaction (and in many cases, racism). And yet, part of the reason why the South was still "Solid" [for Democrats] in the wake of

the New Deal was that the conservative Supreme Court wouldn't let states like Kentucky spend money on their own infrastructure projects before 1932. There are already people in area who are anxious about how far repeal of Obamacare will go, since many are covered under the program, and since many (who otherwise don't even like the program) get special benefits for black lung disease, benefits which may be repealed according in many of the Republican Replacement plans.

In the meantime, a carbon tax in the heart of coal country (supplemented by new jobs for people dependent on the industry) can make coal prices go up, and emissions go down nationwide. And since America is the 2nd largest emitter in the World, that's going to matter a great deal. If the EPA won't keep our emissions low, then the people can do it themselves.

By the way, similar job guarantees to fossil fuels workers funded by carbon taxes could probably be introduced to oil rich states like Louisiana and Mississippi.

I'm often focused on labor struggles to build a better society, and I'm not alone. The thing is that we can't try to build a better society as the permafrost melts, as carbon and methane emissions spike, as weather grows more extreme, as diseases grow more widespread, as refugee crises grow more and more acute for the refugees, and for the societies that struggle to either help or give in to xenophobic reaction. As our own shorelines recede further and further, as our own crops suffer in drought, as the wildfires grow more frequent and intense. We need to do something about Climate Change and we need to be strategic about where we do it.

And in short, that is precisely what we are capable of doing: we can do something that can reduce the emissions of the World's second largest emitter -- even as the Trump/Pruitt team do their damnedest to worsen the effects of Climate Change. Our actions (however small they may seem at the moment) could send a message to emitters around the World, from China to India, from Brazil to Australia, from the European Union to South Africa, that we're still doing what we can on this issue, and that therefore, these other countries need to stick to their Paris Climate commitments (and let's be real, if we're going to listen to the scientists, they'll need to exceed those commitments). We can simultaneously engage at least one state in a region that would be far more open to progressive politics if it weren't for this one issue. We can help revitalize that state or those states, and make worker's self management more widespread. Does that sound like a good set of plans?

SECTION LIES



submitted by: Maddi Picard

A Misadventure on the Sunset Strip

By Simon Fields

Admitting that I went to “The Body Shop” one fine, January 2nd evening is the sort of thing that could backfire. Someone at Hampshire might consider the very fact that I was at a strip club to be evidence of misogyny or creepiness. Someone else may consider it evidence of my immoral, ungodly ways; someone else may shrug and move onto the next item in *The Omen*, one other person who can’t imagine me at a strip club may read on just in order to pester me with the details of my story for months on end. The four of ‘em form the core of our readership. In other words, maybe the risk is worth it; after all, the story which follows needs to be told; it can’t be held back from a magazine that accepts every submission.

There have been three occasions in my life when I frequented a strip club. The first was in Krakow, Poland -- I had a few Kopeks readily supplied by open-minded authority figures, but the experience was fairly unremarkable. “I’ll do anything” she whispered, but at that point I couldn’t afford anything. At all. In fact, when I was told that I needed to buy a third drink with money I didn’t have, and when I feared what would happen if I got beaten up by a Polish bouncer without so much as a cent in my pocket or a cell phone in my jacket, I left. That was in the summer of 2014. Back home in L.A., there was this place called “The Body Shop” on the Sunset Strip; for two years I passed it every day on my way to High School. I always wanted to go there. This last August I did, and when I went there in August I met a charming Iranian girl, and I had a swell time feeling her tits and making mundane small talk. (I didn’t mind the small talk though, it humanized a strange transaction, at least that’s how I chose to think about it.) Mind you, I recall offering to pay the 25 dollars whether she did or didn’t give me a lap dance, but she just found my offer insulting. “Do you want someone else?” “No, you don’t understand, I was just trying to clear my conscience in a half-assed effort.” But these experiences pale in comparison to what happened in January.

It had been over a year since I saw my friend David, and I wanted to take him to the strip club where I got a topless lap dance, imagining that history would repeat itself. I was back at the “Body Shop”, walking into the establishment with my pal who promptly went to the bathroom and then an attractive blonde woman began talking to me, and she asked if I wanted a private show. I demurred, saying that I was waiting for my friend, because I was. I was so shy that she gave up on me, perhaps feeling a little insulted or annoyed right from the get go. Then David showed up and we took our seats around the stage (we were the only patrons there, literally the only patrons; there must have been 20 empty chairs around the two stages, and another twenty or thirty throughout the club), and a very kind blonde

woman began doing her routine on stage. I would describe this part of the evening, but frankly, it was quite awkward, embarrassing, and of little comic value to myself. I’m honest about what I omit, and vague about why. Are you happy with my opaque transparency?

And then the blonde woman whom I had inadvertently insulted came onstage and began getting very sultry with the pole. After a few routine moves on the pole, she went up to me, and I (rather too energetically) said, “hello” as if I were a 21 year old Englishman without the accent. She was sort of taken aback by this, but she found it amusing that my chair sort of tipped back and I nearly lost my balance. After teasing me about this she swiftly moved onto David. Then she said, “Thank you for moving your drinks,” to David and I looked down and saw my two mandated drinks in the wrong place. I said “sorry” as I moved mine out of the way. I suppose I had been spoiled by the blonde lady who moved the drinks out of the way on her own.

Do you notice that I refer to the pole dancers by their hair color? Well, I’ll be honest with you, nobody told me their names, as far as I recall, and there really isn’t any hiding the transactional and impersonal nature of a strip club. That’s the truth as I saw it. These notions were all underlined by the fact that this stripper was asking us, “So are you going to tip me or what?” The stripper who went on before her, who was watching from the sidelines, said, “They were so impressed by you that they forgot to tip,” in between laughs -- and I wasn’t sure if they were genuine laughs, since we did remember to tip her on time. Needless to say, this banter was incredibly awkward. My friend pulled out some singles. “Come on this won’t be enough for me to go to Starbucks,” the blonde pole dancer observed, and at that moment I’m thinking about how I only have one bill left, and it’s a fiver. Well, maybe she’d like an extra latte. So I pulled it out and said, “this should help with Starbucks” but you see, since all she saw was one faceless bill dropping on the stage and all she heard was my dismissive sounding comment, my friend continued receiving most of the attention. Let’s face it, my friend is also a better looking patron.

But the night was just beginning at this point, and from here on out this story gets much less dry, and much more interesting. For all intents and purposes, the preceding story is foreplay. Awkward foreplay at that.

As you know, the brown haired pole dancer had taken a liking to my friend, and after giving him quite the show, she got back to me. She wanted me to hold her as she jumped off the stage. I didn’t realize she was planning to jump, and I did a damned awful job of keeping her in the air. In other words, I was taken by surprise and I dropped her, but she still landed on her two feet. I still felt pretty lame about it. Being able to hold a girl in midair is one of those masculine things a heroic manly protagonist would do in just about any movie, and I could have held her up bigad, if I knew what was coming.

She got back on the stage, and started moving her hand into

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my denim jacket, which may have been sexy but it was also slightly unsettling. You see, in my denim jacket, I have these inner pockets, and in one of those inner pockets, I happened to have a novel. She noticed this, and pointed at the pocket, asking, "What's in there?"

"Huh? Oh," says I nonchalantly as possible, "a book".

My friend looked at me from the other part of the table (we were the only patrons you know) and he says, ready to crack up, "you brought a book here? No I don't believe it."

"What's the book called?" She asks.

"Flashman and the Tiger... Wait no that's not what it is," I fumble trying to remember the title as she pulls the book out of my jacket.

"What is it so boring here you thought you'd be reading a book?"

"No, no, you don't understand..."

She reads the title, "Flashman in, " and I cringe because I know the title and I know that it'll sound weird, "the Great Game" -- she says this with emphasis on the words Flashman and Game - in a way which seems to insinuate something, and I tried not to know what it was.

"You actually brought a book here. Hahahaha. I can't believe you brought a book here. I didn't believe it till she, bwahahahahaha," my friend was laughing even more than he usually does. But I didn't bring the book for the strip club, I think as I pretend to be amused at my own stupidity. I just happened to have it...

"What is this English Lit 101?"

How demeaning! (You want to talk demeaning, I imagine some readers saying, how do you think the pole would be? I'm not sure if I have a good answer to that. Is the pole always demeaning? Can it be empowering? Can it be neutral? Can it be all of these things to different people?) "No, it's just a book I really like, partly because it was set in 19th Century Britain," I hear myself explaining, and begin wondering how I got talking about Victorians at a strip club.

"What's it about?"

"Well, it's about a soldier, who is a complete coward, but who is always in the right place at the right time and everyone thinks he's a hero."

Unfortunately, the blonde pole dancer was watching this whole exchange from a corner, and she suddenly said, "Don't say that about yourself." Well, she thought I thought of myself as a coward. I did but that was besides the point. Her sympathy

might've made my blood boil if it wasn't so sincere. Well, at the very least, she seemed sincerely sympathetic. She was so sweet about it too. "No, you don't understand -- this is a book about a fictional character named Harry Flashman, who lived in the 1800s, and he was a coward -- and he got away with being one." Then I added another detail, to make it clear that even this fictional character isn't someone you should feel particularly sorry for as I said, "And he got all sorts of medals and awards. The Victoria Cross. He was also a Baronet... And his views on lots of things are very, uh backwards but he is from a different time and he's a fictional character..." Now the truth is that I am a coward, but I still wasn't describing myself in this conversation. I never got the spoils of courage from my cowardice. And I don't think my views are backwards. Who does?

"Sounds interesting," the brown haired pole dancer holding the book said, shifting my focus back where it wanted to be, "I'd like to read it." And so she began reading my book, from the stage. It didn't take long for her to remark, "This is no Pulitzer honey."

Eager to defend my book, and not exactly thinking pragmatically about what would be in my interest (i.e., her returning the book to me and resuming with the pole dance) I said, "Yeah but you haven't read the whole thing yet, just the first page, so even though it isn't a Pulitzer..."

"Don't judge a book by its cover," she finishes my sentence, and she continues reading. As my eyes grow less focused on the person reading my book, my ears note that the music at the Body Shop, horrendous though it was, had two advantages: 1. It didn't sound like the music at a massage parlour, and 2. it wasn't intrusively loud. I'm not saying it was Gershwin or anything, but at least it wasn't intrusive.

And she continues reading, and I rather stupidly turn to my friend, who, needless to say, is still laughing up a storm, and say, "Can you believe this is happening at a strip club?" This elicits a few chuckles, followed by guilt about what I just said, and after a bit more time passes, she tells me, "I'm really interested in screenwriting."

"Who's your favorite screenwriter?"

"Ridley Scott."

I pause: "My Dad's first name is Scott." But I forgot to talk about his screenwriting days. Or years.

Somebody, I'm not sure who it was initially -- the pole dancer on stage, the stripper on the sidelines, my friend David, points out that it's rather dark, and I concur and begin wondering how one could read with this sort of lighting. The reader on stage gets the hint, and hands Flashman back to me, and I put it into my infamous inner pocket. Then, bending down, she decides to ask, "Can you read this?" Her tuchas and shandfleish only a few

inches from my face.

"Yeah I think so," I say, trying not to sound tentative, while my friend enthusiastically enjoins, "I definitely can!" Then I felt embarrassed by my hesitation.

Shortly after this, my friend goes into the back for a private lap dance with the first, kindly stripper who I wasn't quite as attracted to. In the meantime, it was just me, and an aspiring screenwriter standing still, and then sitting at the edge of the stage, above me. My word, she'd make a great screenwriter; she knew how to write the best dialogue when she was in the middle of her act. "Do you want a lap dance?" She said, which would've been music to my ears if I could've paid for it.

"How much would a lap dance be," I ask, trying to lie to myself about the fact that after tipping her I'm dead broke and price isn't even a factor.

"A lap dance would be \$40." Now I knew from my previous experiences that 40 dollars here is for the full on nude dance, whereas its 25 bucks for a topless dance, which is all I'd feel comfortable paying for anyhow. The closer it gets to sex, the more moral my wallet is, for some reason. It might even be some hypocritical wishy washy version of 21st Century morality. I'm not sure. None of this even mattered at the time. I was broke.

"I'm sorry, I can't afford a lap dance."

"Yes you can, come on. Your friend went to the ATM Machine and you can too."

"No, my bank balance really sucks at the moment. I can't even do that."

"Yes you can."

"No I can't."

"You definitely can. You live around here, don't you? You know what, stop being such a Jew about it!"

I couldn't have invented this conversation if I tried. "Hey! I am a Jew."

"Oh that's alright you don't have to get upset, I'm Jewish too." she says, and that really pisses me off cause now I can't get on a persecuted high horse -- a rare exotic experience for Los Angeles Jews...

But then she says, "Okay, I'll show you."

And she gets off the stage, walks over to the counter and grabs her purse. She comes back, unzips the purse (if only she could play with some other zippers...) and she pulls out a small piece

of paper with a Hebrew prayer on it. "Can you speak Hebrew?"

"Well, I don't understand it, but I can read it." Then I look at the paper, and you know, the orange hue of the light is so dim, the letters are so small, I can't see the vowels. After a bit of a pause she says, "Okay, you can't speak Hebrew." And she takes the piece of paper and puts it back in her purse. We continue chatting for awhile, rather forcefully says, "You know, you've got to JUST RELAX." Mind you, usually, I've been lucky -- in August I was told to relax in a very relaxing and soothing way. This time around, well: "Just RELAX. ENJOY yourself. Come on, you know you wa-, oh for, just get the lap dance. Or do you want someone else?" No pressure.

Gulp. "You don't get it, I would totally want a lap dance from you. You're beautiful and sexy," I say enthusiastically as possible," but I'm broke!"

"You've got to RELAX." You see, usually this makes me think, poor me I need to loosen up a bit. This time around I was thinking, if I don't loosen up a bit in the next three nanoseconds it'll make me a terrible person, which was augmented by her next remark: "You're acting weird. Stop acting weird. You know who you're like?"

"Who?"

"Larry David."

"I'm like Larry David?"

"Yes you're exactly like Larry David." If I was a comedian I would've been quite flattered. But I'm not a comedian, I'm not sure if I'm cut out for that line of work.

"Do you really think I'm like Larry David?" I say, and as I recollect the conversation I feel like patting my hair, as if to reassure myself that it still sits on my head. At the time, I glanced down at my leather jacket and the denim one underneath it, and the colorful buttoned shirt beneath that.

"Yes exactly like Larry David." And then I decide to actually relax, and make the most of the situation, so I say, in a stereotypical, New Yorker, Jewish accent that sounded more like Woody Allen than Larry David "I'm sorry I- I uh, I just don't have the money." And she says that she likes me and kisses my cheek, and I'm not sure if it's because we formed some weird co-religionist connection, or because she wanted me to change my mind and pay up, (and ENJOY myself for goodness sake) as if I could. She left the stage, put on *some* more clothing, and stands by the counter a few yards away, slightly behind my line of vision. I sit, sipping my "Shirley Temple" drink, a sweet non-alcoholic beverage I might have gotten at my Bar Mitzvah, and after a while of sitting there, alone, in front of a pole, I decide CONTINUED ON PAGE 16....

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...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

to leave my seat. I walk around the empty club, I observe it's interesting and underrated decor. There are red velvet chairs, and there's a red carpet. The main chairs surround two connected stages, one pole apiece; there are also high and low tables, with corresponding chairs and stools. Nobody is sitting in any of the chairs or any of the stools. Eerie. It's like one of those silent movie theaters that nobody goes to anymore. Everyone watches things online these days. The decorations will get called trashy, or gaudy which is just a genteel way of saying trashy, regardless of how tasteful they really are. And the pole dancers will get labeled slutty strippers regardless of what their names are, whether they want to be screenwriters, or beauty stylists, or if they strip for a lark; whether they strip in Krakow, came here from Iran, or plan on eating Shabbat dinner in a few days. And I walk back to the counter and say, truly concerned about the person I'm becoming, "when you say I'm like Larry David, is it because I've been abrasive?"

The aspiring screenwriter looks me right in the eye, and gives me the best line of dialogue I may ever write: "That's such a Larry David thing to say."

Blessed Be. Radio. Blessed Be.

Wyatt Martin

My voice rings with the rhythm
of a key-board click click
space snare hits
bass and my brain waves
sync with the radio tunes
boom goes the bass again
this time upright, orchestrated
in part by NPR, eighty-eight-five
on the dial, three pm on the
clock, stop to watch the light
in the window for a while be-
fore four rolls around and
I decide to write a rhyth-
mic piece of prose to submit
to the reader dead-line ex-
tended to the fifteenth and
Feb-ruar-y has been
a weird month for me.

I love WTCC more than most people and I want that known that at Thursday at Midnight at once appears a voice so smooth so-moon-light-ly de-light-ful, cruise through the magical musical Soul program she portends the future and the past of Black Music history and here and now is Dr. Love, is their name's voice and their voice's name and this is real(!) Pioneer Valley people listen up it's from Springfield Technical Community College WTCC ninety-point-seven on the dial thank the gods that be on radio bless radio be on please be on

The New York Times

nytimes.com/passes

Roses are red
Violets are blue
When I see
I feel
need
The
poem.

Does not include e-reader editions, Times Insider content or digital versions of
The New York Times Crossword. Other restrictions may apply.

submitted by: Maddi Picard

Have you ever noticed?

by Simon Fields

Have you ever noticed that as you grow older, your laugh sounds more and more like a jackal
And less and less human?

Well, I've heard it happen to my laugh, it may not have happened to yours.

Have you e'er noticed that life has an infinite capacity to be cruel
And an equally infinite capacity to be kind?

Now that's a truism, you may say, a no shit Sherlock sort of statement;

Yet the reason it's a truism is that we've all had thousands of experiences
Read of scores more that all illustrate that truth in painful and joyous detail--
And by God we're only in College!

Have you evah noticed that the more acquainted one gets with life's mysteries
The more truisms and vague platitudes seem to make sense?

Have you ever noticed that the more you may study about some policy issue,
Or get circumspect about your past
Distant and near

And as you step back and look again at the bigger picture
The platitudes and truisms take on a new meaning
Yet grow all the more reinforced!

(Confirmation bias, you cry -- and may very well be right)

Well, these are the things that I notice:
It seems I've gone full circle
And as my inner cynic battles with my inner hopes and dreams,
I wonder about how my laugh will sound if I live to be eighty
Will it sound more like a jackal, or more like a human than it does today?

The remarkable thing is, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls
It really can go either way.

Bitterness

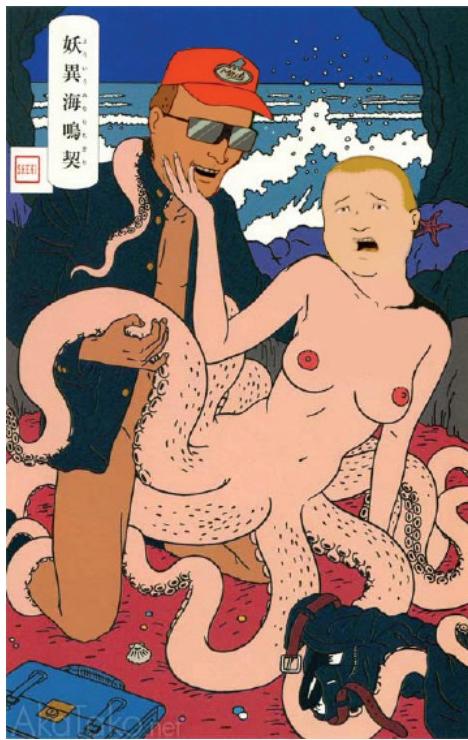
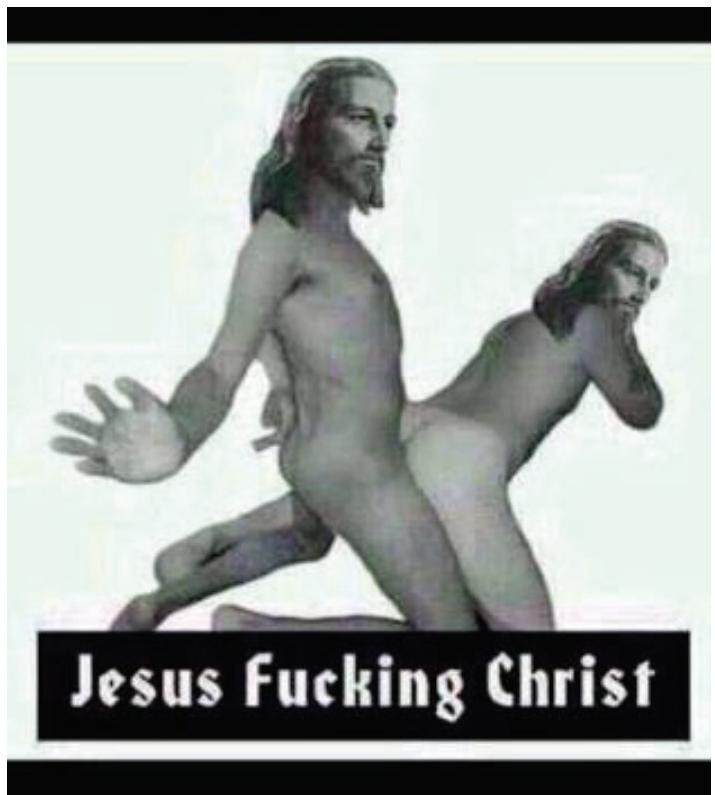
By Spencer Winell

Ever find yourself asking why you're still here?
Why did you stick around with year after year of increasing misery?
Ever find yourself thinking about all those times you fucked up?
Ever feel like it's the only thing on your mind?
Worthless
Hopeless
Helpless
This emptiness, this void is the only constant thing you've known
Your isolation is your only companion
All the while the world crumbles
No signs of things getting better like they said it would
How am I supposed to feel about you now?
All you doctors who scolded me and tried to "save" me
All you celebrities who made those videos in big bold letters "IT GETS BETTER"
As far as I'm concerned you doctors get off on running exercises in futility
As far as I'm concerned you videographers are liars
And you're the worst kind of liar too
Because you think it's all in the name of your good intentions
I can't help but think my 16 year old self was right
Can't help but think I might have had it all figured out by then when I was dangling from that rope out my window
There's still a part of my soul that holds resent for you
All of you
Who, through smiling faces and claims of "sympathy", tell me how glad you are to know I survived
Survived my attempt to save myself from who I am now
Where I am now
What I am now?
I'm bitter.
It gets worse.
It's getting worse.
My heart knows what it wants
My mind is on the same page
My inhibitions keep me here
Inhibitions and nothing more
This is my naked soul
Prozac doesn't do shit
Being dependent on Pfizer won't help my self image
But yeah sure I'll keep up the facade
I'll keep it going long enough to fade into the ether
And be anesthetized when I take that final breath



"SMUT"

Submitted by Maddi Picard



Zoho: A Journey into the Annals of (the Omen's) Fundcom History continued...

submitted by: Chloe Omelchuck

Short and Sweet: Jgardz, cool? cool!

FEBRUARY 3 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

Valentines for our yearly V-Day issue! There are 6 per sheet we're using, so 180 total, which will hopefully be enough. They'll be cut out and placed next to a box in the mail room for folks to fill out, and then next layout I will painstakingly scan all of them in. It's a labor of love, because the Omen is the only thing I will ever love.

FEBRUARY 3 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen is Hampshire's free speech publication. You already knew that, though. It has existed for as long as anyone can remember, and it will probably be here long after everyone else is gone. Probably. It's worth noting that this issue will mark the return of Sky's Activity Booklet; Remember Sky's Activity Booklet? No? Neither does anyone else, but it's coming back for this issue! Wow! How exciting! It'll be printed on 8.5x11 paper folded into booklets and inserted into every copy of The Omen. The Omen proper, meanwhile, will as usual be printed on 11x17 paper folded into 8.5x11 booklets. Cool? Cool!

FEBRUARY 18 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen! Valentine's Day Special Edition! (It'll be a little late for V-Day, but oh well!) With an extra-special generous helping of Richard

Nixon! To be distributed Thursday, February 20th! How exciting!

\$288

Alternatively, if you guys start providing funding in the form of cryptocurrency, you could give us 336362.29 dogecoins instead. Such funding. Very currency. Wow.

MARCH 3 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen is Hampshire's free speech publication. We publish anything and everything submitted to us, as long as it is not anonymous or libelous.

Thanks a ton, Fundcom!

MARCH 24 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen publishes nothing but lies. The Nemo, on the other hand, is Hampshire's most reputable newspaper, published yearly on the first day of April.

MARCH 25 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen, in its natural habitat, eats free speech, although it dislikes anonymity and libelous speech. This is the rare color issue Omen, which only appears once or twice a year!

APRIL 15 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

Hampshire's free speech publication etc. etc. you know the drill. (sorry no funny jokes this time, I am feeling exceptionally uncreative today.)

APRIL 29 2014

Submitted by Jgardz

The Omen's last issue EVER. (or at least for this semester.) Free speech, mildly sacrilegious celebrations, HSU controversies, and more! Thanks, FundCom! We'll miss you!

The Omen Initiative: The silver age of Fundcom requests

SEPTEMBER 22 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

Every semester the members of FundCom have the opportunity to set the course of publications for our campus and its communities. The publication that you select will make important decisions that will affect you and your family. I urge you to participate in this process. Allow us to bring The Omen to the citizens of Hampshire College.

\$256 is a small price to pay for free speech and campus-wide autonomy.

OCTOBER 3 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

Dear FundCom,

I have something you might want: the next edition of the omen. All 200 copies, all 40 pages.

If you ever want to see the omen again, transfer

the requested money into our account.

Do not go to the police.

How much is the safe return of the Omen worth to you? I would hope it's at least \$400, FundCom.

OCTOBER 21 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

This is not a drill. I repeat, this is not a drill. The Omen is back.

All agents report to your stations.

Fundcom, we'll need your help too. Your mission, should you choose to accept it: Send The Omen a peace offering. Four cents per page should do. At 40 pages per copy and 200 copies, and factoring in what we have in surplus from last time The Omen attacked, that's $.04 * 40 * 200 = \$320 - \80 ; so, \$240

NOVEMBER 4 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

The Omen: Publication of choice for financially-minded citizens everywhere.

This issue is shorter, because we here at the Omen care about the financial wellbeing of the school. We care about you, FundCom. Don't you care about us?

Please return our calls.

<3 - The Omen

\$224

Alternatively, we could put out 68,169 copies of the omen for \$76,349.28 cents - 72 whole cents less than hampshire halloween!

Everyone would probably enjoy the campus being flooded in copies of the Omen.

If you agree, you can give us \$76,349.28 and

we'll print that many copies.

NOVEMBER 13 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

The Omen, World Fair!

The future is here, and the Omen has always been forward-thinking. Gasp at the 32 pages of glossy paper. Marvel at the technology of the current age. Stare in awe at YOUR submission, in full, beautiful color!

We usually print at Duplications, but for color it's much cheaper to go to an outside company (17.5 cents per page instead of 40). We'll be using Hadley Printing.

NOVEMBER 22 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

Alas, we trudge from the beautiful weather and happy, colorful moments of Autumn, and into the cold grasp of winter.

The Omen would like to commemorate this sad event by printing a somber, black and white edition of the Omen - to match the weariness in all our hearts. The Omen has complicated, love-like feelings for you. <3...?

FEBRUARY 4 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

There was an idea. Called the Omen Initiative. The idea was to bring together a group of remarkable students, see if they become something more. See if they can work together when we needed them to. To make the publications that we never could.

People doubted. Other publications were given more attention. But the campus needs us. As disparate as the staff and submitters of the Omen are, as much as it seems they could never work together - when Hampshire needs them to, they will. Now is one of those times. The Omen

Initiative is in need of funding to create its next issue.

FEBRUARY 16 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

The Omen: holdout from the 90s.

Only 90s kids remember and continue to complain about Greg Prince. Who does he think he is? Why is he still the president of Hampshire College? We should refuse to shake his hand at graduation until he relents with pet policy changes.

MARCH 2 2014

Submitted by B Corfman

You are the foremost journalist in the country. You've been selected to lead a small team of experts to create the most incredible publication the world has ever seen.

Work is tough, but you manage to put together a truly great magazine.

But it won't be that easy, it seems. You need to secure funding.

If you present your case to the local funding body, requesting \$288 as the total cost of printing, turn to page 78.

If you thought time travel to the age of the dinosaurs in order to avoid your responsibilities, turn to page 82

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